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UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 001039

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR WHA/PD; IIP/G/WHA DIPASQUALE; AND IIP/T/ES
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON CAFTA, MAY 16, 2005

1. On 05/16 the Tegucigalpa-based liberal daily "La Tribuna" published an op-ed by Gautama Fonseca entitled "Our productive capacity and CAFTA." "A lot of people don't know about the Central American Economic Integration because it has been handled behind closed doors, the same reason why only the Economic ministries of the governments of the region and some private businesses have participated in it."

"It took place in Guatemala in the `60s while discussing the treatment for some `sensitive' products."

"Guatemala refused to recognize the origin of Salvadoran spark plugs. El Salvador did the same with Guatemalan tires."

"As a consequence, both delegations discussed their differences extensively and intensively until they resolved to put it to an end. They became celebrities in the Integration."

"Both countries described the reality of the majority of the so-called Central American industries and the truth finally surfaced after being hidden due to pressures from the private sector."

"These men are so special that they are sure that with CAFTA the democracy and liberty will be brought back to life in Central America. But, as they should have known, neither of them exists because there has been no interest in giving them life."

Palmer